Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEL AV 02440 230736Z ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

-----126739 231029Z /23

R 230701Z FEB 78 FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1415

CONFIDENTIAL TEL AVIV 2440

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: MILI, IS, US

SUBJECT: SS LIBERTY CLAIM

REF: STATE 43537

- 1. WHEN I DISCUSSED THE SS LIBERTY CLAIM INFORMALLY WITH EVRON FEBRUARY 21, HE SUGGESTED THAT I DELIVER THE FORMAL NOTE TO HIM RATHER THAN WAIT. THE PROBLEM IS BOGGED DOWN IN GOI INTER-AGENCY BUCK-PASSING, AND EVRON SAID HE WOULD PREFER TO HAVE THE NOTE NOW TO HELP BREAK THE LOGJAM.
- 2. ACCORDINGLY, WE HAVE DELIVERED THE NOTE AS CONTAINED IN PARA FIVE OF REFTEL TO THE MFA TODAY, FEBRUARY 22.
- 3. EVRON SAID THAT HE HOPED WE COULD INDEED NEGOTIATE OVER THE AMOUNT OF THE CLAIM AND THAT THE FIGURE WE HAVE CITED WOULD NOT BE A TAKE-IT-OR-LEAVE-IT PROPOSITION. I RESPONDED THAT THE TEXT OF THE NOTE I WAS INSTRUCTED TO DELIVER ASKED FOR AGREEMENT TO COMMENCE "NEGOTIATIONS," WHICH I INTERPRETED AS MEANING THE AMOUNT MIGHT INDEED BE NEGOTIABEL. HOWEVER, I MADE CLEAR I HAD NO INSTRUCTIONS OTHER THAN TO PRESENT THE NOTE AS DRAFTED.

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4. SINCE EVRON WAS MINISTER AT THE ISRAELI EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON WHEN THIS UNHAPPY EVENT OCCURRED, HE HAS PERSONALLY BEEN INVOLVED FROM THE BEGINNING AND WOULD LIKE NOTHING BETTER THAN TO RESOLVE THE CLAIM ONCE AND FOR ALL. APPARENTLY, THERE REMAINS CONSIDERABLE RESISTANCE SOMEWHERE IN THE GOI TO PAYING COMPENSATION FOR THE PHYSICAL DAMAGE TO THE SHIP. HOWEVER, I FEEL

HOPEFUL THAT WE CAN ENTER INTO FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS IN
THE NEAR FUTURE ON THE BASIS OF THE NOTE.
LEWIS

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Concepts: CLAIMS, MILITARY EQUIPMENT, NAVAL FORCES

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TAGS: MILI, IS, US To: STATE

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